

TRIBUTE TO CARMEN SALINAS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Carmen Salinas on her work representing Mexico as Señora Internacional during the Washington Birthday Celebration, which is the largest celebration of its kind in the United States.

Mrs. Carmen Salinas was born on September 4, 1933, in the City of Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico. Her early steps in the arts were marked by her strong desire to give the public a great performance. In 1964, Mrs. Salinas worked in television under the direction of Mr. Ernesto Alonzo in the productions of "La Vecindad," "La Frontera," "Sublime Redencion," and "El Chofer." Her theatrical work includes productions of "Cada Quien Su Vida," "Vine, Vi y Mejor Me Fui," but according to critics, her best performance was in "Aprendiendo a Ser Señora."

Mrs. Carmen Salinas' work on the big screen is to be admired. She has starred in big-screen productions including "Distrito Federal," "Paso de Cojo," "Que Viva Tepito," "Danzon," "Albures Mexicanos," and "Nos Reimos de la Migra," among many others. Her performances in the small screen include super hits such as "Abrazame Muy Fuerte," "Preciosa," "Mi Pequeña Traviesa," and "Maria Mercedes." She is also recognized as a successful entrepreneur, particularly for her theatrical presentation "Aventurera," one of Mexico's most popular theatrical productions in recent history, which also has been featured in many cities in the United States with great crossover appeal.

She was recently honored in New York by the A.C.E. Awards, and also received the "Palmas de Oro" award. The Hispanic community is proud to consider Mrs. Carmen Salinas as one of its most influential role models.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the dedication of Carmen Salinas to the Hispanic-American community in the United States.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT: FEBRUARY 1, 2007.

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, I am introducing legislation to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act, MMPA, to remove the requirement in the act for commercial fisheries "to further reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals to an insignificant level approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate," which is commonly referred to as the "Zero Mortality Rate Goal."

Congress enacted the MMPA in 1972, in part, to address the high mortality rate of marine mammals occurring in the yellowfin tuna purse seine fishery in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. In response to these high mor-

ality levels, Congress created a zero mortality rate goal for this fishery. At the time, Congress was very specific in how this goal should be applied to the fishery. The goal was not to shut down fisheries, but reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury rate of marine mammals. In this case, once the Secretary of Commerce was satisfied that the tuna fishermen were using the best available technology to assure minimal hazards to marine mammal populations, the goal of a reduced mortality rate was met. This standard also allowed the Secretary to take into account the economic and technological practicability of the best available technology.

In the 1980s, Congress reaffirmed the intent of zero mortality rate goal. Congress recognized the progress made by the purse seine fishery to reduce its mortality rates and maintained the technology standard for this fishery. The 1981 House Report stated zero mortality rate goal "is satisfied . . . by a continuation of the application of the best marine mammal safety techniques and equipment that are economically and technologically practicable."

It wasn't until the 1990s that Congress applied dolphin mortality limits to the yellowfin tuna purse seine fishery. These limits were based on the International Dolphin Conservation Act of 1992 and the International Dolphin Conservation Program Act of 1997. It is important to note that the mortality limits established in the 1992 act were based on reductions that could be achieved by the gear currently being used in the fishery.

For other fisheries, Congress maintained the zero mortality rate goal as a means to promote new technology to reduce the incidental taking of marine mammals. In the 1994 Marine Mammal Protection Act amendments, Congress created a new fishery regime which authorized limited incidental takes of marine mammals in commercial fisheries and retained the economic and technological practicability finding. In section 118, which guides the take reduction plan process, it specifically states "The long-term goal of the plan shall be to reduce, within 5 years of its implementation, the incidental mortality or serious injury of marine mammals incidentally taken in the course of commercial fishing operations to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate, taking into account the economics of the fishery, the availability of existing technology and existing state or regional fishery management plans."

In 2002, the National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS, was sued by a number of environmental groups for not complying with the requirements of section 118, and as part of the settlement NMFS was required to define the zero mortality rate goal. NMFS established a threshold level for mortality and serious injury that would meet this requirement. NMFS defined an Insignificance Threshold in regulations and estimated this threshold level as 10 percent of the "Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level."

The MMPA has a number of guiding principles to assist in the protection of marine mammals. The overall goal of the Act is to maintain or restore marine mammal populations to their Optimum Sustainable Population. Another is the potential biological removal level, PBR, for a marine mammal stock which is defined as the "maximum number of animals, not including natural mortalities, that may be removed from a marine mammal stock

while allowing that stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population." When calculating PBR the agency takes into account all activities with incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals. However, the fishing industry is the only industry required to take on the burden of reducing the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals through a take reduction team process.

Commercial fisherman do not want to kill marine mammals. They want to harvest fish. Fisherman have been willing participants and in some cases leaders in the research and development of gear to reduce interactions with marine mammals. In addition, the take reduction team process, with the help of commercial fishermen, has been successful in reducing interactions between fisheries and marine mammals. However, I believe the requirement for commercial fisheries to reduce their level of interactions with marine mammals to a level of 10 percent of PBR is overly burdensome.

For that reason, I am proposing this legislation which will remove the zero mortality rate goal from the act. It will retain the requirement for commercial vessel owners or operators to report all incidental mortality and injury of marine mammals during the course of a commercial fishery. Fisheries will continue to be listed as category I, II, or III based on the level of marine mammal mortality and injury occurring in the fishery. The Secretary will still be required to establish take reduction teams and develop take reduction plans to reduce the level of marine mammal mortality and serious injury to levels below PBR in commercial fisheries around the Nation.

This is common sense conservation legislation that should be enacted by this Congress.

RECOGNIZING JEREMY CHRISTIAN TYLER CRUZ FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam, Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremy Christian Tyler Cruz, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376 and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremy has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the years Jeremy has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Jeremy's dedication to his community is outstanding. He has received the World Conservation Award, the 12 Month Camper Award (four times), the 100 Nights Camper Award, and also planned and supervised the expansion of the main picnic shelter at Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary in Liberty, Missouri.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremy Christian Tyler Cruz for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.